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Bar Council

BAR COUNCIL TO APPLY FOR WATCHING BRIEF STATUS

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 19 (Bernama) -- The Bar Council will apply for observer or watching brief status at the independent Commission of Inquiry, set up to probe injuries allegedly sustained by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim while in police custody.

The commission will commence its open inquiry on Monday.

Bar Council President Datuk Dr Cyrus Das said the council as a body concerned with the enforcement of law and justice was "vitaly interested" in all matters relating to custodial violence to prevent its recurrence.

"The Bar Council is pleased to note that the Commission has organised itself swiftly to begin its hearing on Feb 22."

"The Bar Council hopes that the Commission will move with all deliberate speed to complete its inquiry and submit its report and recommendations to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong," said Das in a statement today.

The setting up of the commission was announced by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last month following calls by various groups that Anwar's injury be fully investigated.

Investigations conducted by the police earlier had been found to be incomplete by Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah.

Anwar, who was removed as deputy prime minister and finance minister on Sept 2, last year and arrested two weeks later for allegedly leading an unlawful assembly, appeared in court on Sept 29 with the infamous black left eye.

Anwar alleged that he had been beaten unconscious while in police custody.

Das said the council hoped that justice would be done and that the person or persons responsible for the injuries were brought to account.

The council also reiterated its call to the Commission to use this opportunity to stipulate guidelines to prevent the occurrence of custodial violence as is done in other countries.

"The Bar Council will be pleased to render whatever assistance to the Commission, if called upon, on the law relating to custodial violence locally and in foreign jurisdictions," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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